

## **Work Elements Commuter Rail Project Phase I Belen to Bernalillo**

### **Scientific Survey of Residents Valencia, Sandoval, Bernalillo Counties**

Description: This document contains results from a research study commissioned by the Mid-Region Council of Governments to measure among Albuquerque Metro area residents:

- Support levels for a new commuter rail system that would run along the Rio Grande Valley and the I-25 corridor
- Perceptions of the adequacy of the current transportation system in the Albuquerque Metro area
- Identify most effective messages to encourage ridership of the proposed rail and bus system
- Identify factors most important to commuters when considering whether to use public transportation

The survey was conducted via Telephone interviews between June 17th and June 26th, 2005. A total of 1,250 adult individuals interviews were completed:

- $n=500$  Albuquerque Metro area adult residents
- $n=375$  Valencia County adult residents who commute to certain employment clusters in Albuquerque for school and/or work
- $n=375$  Southern Sandoval County adult residents who commute to certain employment clusters in Albuquerque for school and/or work

The Albuquerque Metro sample size of 500 at a 95% confidence level provides a maximum margin of error of 4.4%. In theory, in 95 out of 100 cases, the results based on a sample of 500 will differ by no more than 4.4 percentage points in either direction from what would have been obtained by interviewing all Albuquerque Metro area adult residents. The Valencia County sample size of 375 and southern Sandoval County sample size of 375 at a 95% confidence level each provide a maximum margin of error of 5.1%. In theory, in 95 out of 100 cases, the results based on a sample of 375 will differ by no more than 5.1 percentage points in either direction from what would have been obtained by interviewing all Valencia County and southern Sandoval County area adult residents.

### **Marketing Campaign**

Description: The MRCOG retained the services of Vaughn Weeden Creative, and the Star Group to develop and test naming and branding ideas for the service, and marketing materials including billboards, merchandise, and advertisements. The marketing campaign will become more prominent as the service start date nears.

## **Planning & Market Analysis**

Description: The MRCOG & NMDOT staff have utilized travel demand model data, data from the transportation accessibility model, socio economic forecasts, survey data, Census data, Census Transportation Planning Package Data (CTPP), econometric data, travel time data, traffic counts, Air Quality Model Data, public transportation services data, digital ortho-photography and other information to conduct planning for commuter rail station sites, evaluate potential markets for the commuter rail service, plan connecting transit services, identify alternative train schedules and generate fare information. This information is included in numerous maps, spreadsheets, charts, Arcview applications and documents. A summary of these activities is included in the Document entitled "*Belen to Santa Fe Commuter Rail Project Overview and Status of Project Elements.*" This document is available on the New Mexico Rail Runner Web Site at [www.nmrailrunner.com](http://www.nmrailrunner.com). This document has been on the MRCOG website since October 2004 and is updated quarterly with the most recent information and project developments.

## **Development of Equipment Specifications**

Description: MRCOG retained the services of LTK Engineering Inc. To investigate the availability and feasibility of new and used equipment for the service. LTK worked with the MRCOG and the NMDOT to develop specifications for the coaches and locomotives that were procured for the service. These specifications can be found in contract documents between the MRCOG and Motive Power Inc. and Bombardier Transportation Inc.

## **Capital Cost Estimate & Expenditures**

Description: In the fall of 2004 the NMDOT and MRCOG released a Capital Cost estimate for Phase I capital expenditures. This estimate included a budget ceiling of \$75 million and a breakout of major capital items that included Station Construction, Acquisition of Rolling Stock, Track and Signal Improvements, and Maintenance facilities. Actual expenditures have been updated on a quarterly basis in the report entitled "*Belen to Santa Fe Commuter Rail Project Overview and Status of Project Elements.*" This document is available on the New Mexico Rail Runner Web Site at [www.nmrailrunner.com](http://www.nmrailrunner.com).

## **Operational Cost Estimates**

Description: In the fall of 2004 the NMDOT and MRCOG released an Annual Operating Cost estimate for Phase I operating expenditures. This estimate was based on unit costs incurred by other commuter rail operations applied to different levels of train service which resulted in an estimated range of \$8-12 million a year. The MRCOG and NMDOT have been working on an actual operating budget for the first three years of service for

Phase I operations. Based on this work it is clear that costs will not exceed the dollars programmed for the first three years of service.

### **Station Design & Construction Plans**

Description: The MRCOG retained the services of HDR Engineering Inc. To design and prepare construction plans for the 9 stations associated with Phase 1. These plans are available at the offices of MRCOG.

### **Coach & Locomotive Specifications**

Description: The procurement of rolling stock for Phase 1 required the preparation of performance specifications for both cars and locomotives. LTK engineering assisted the MRCOG and the NMDOT with the preparation of these specifications. They are available at the offices of the MRCOG.

### **Public Involvement Activities**

Description: The MRCOG and the NMDOT have engaged in an unprecedented public involvement campaign for the Commuter Rail project. Over 200 presentations have been provided to all kinds of groups in the Albuquerque and Santa Fe areas. Over 15 formal public meetings have been held and presentations have been made on an ongoing basis to elected officials and bodies in both regions. The Rail Runner has also had an active website for over a year now which contains information on the project, newsletters and other public information. The website also allows users to ask questions about the project via email. In addition the Commuter Rail project has been the subject of numerous news and magazine articles and was featured on the Government Channel in Albuquerque. Over 70% of respondents surveyed in the survey mentioned above were aware of the commuter rail project. A summary of these public involvement activities is included in the report "*Belen to Santa Fe Commuter Rail Project Overview and Status of Project Elements*". This document is available on the New Mexico Rail Runner Web Site at [www.nmrailrunner.com](http://www.nmrailrunner.com) and is updated on a quarterly basis.

### **Operations Work Program & Responsibilities**

Description: The MRCOG and the NMDOT hired Herzog Transit Services Inc. as the contract operator and maintenance firm for the service. The MRCOG prepared a detailed work scope for several different operational elements that outlines operations and maintenance responsibilities. This document addresses all Federal Railway Administration and industry standard safety, operational and maintenance requirements. This work scope is available at the MRCOG offices.

### **Draft Service Design**

Description: The MRCOG and the NMDOT have prepared a draft service design (train schedule) For the first year of the service. This schedule is posted on the Rail Runner web site as part of a 30 day comment period before the schedule is finalized.

### **Draft Fare Policy**

The MRCOG has prepared a draft fare policy for Phase I service, that also anticipates service to Santa Fe. The draft fare policy has been submitted to the NMDOT for review.

### **Railroad Crossing Diagnostic**

Description: This document includes a review of all crossings of the railroad line from Belen to Bernalillo. It was produced in September of 2004 by the NMDOT, MRCOG, HDR FRA and BNSF. It includes recommendations for crossing improvements and consolidations. It is available at the offices of the MRCOG.

### **Environmental Analysis (Initial Site Assessment & Phase II Assessment)**

Description: This document includes the results of the Phase 1 Analysis of the rail line from Belen to Bernalillo. It includes the identification of potential environmental within and outside of the rail corridor. The document includes a recommendation for further investigations (Phase II) on two sites within the rail corridor. Testing has been completed for Phase II sites and a report is pending.

### **Inventory and Line Valuation**

Description: In June of 2005 the NMDOT and MRCOG had HDR prepare a complete inventory of mainline track, spur track and side track between Belen and Trinidad Colorado. This report is available at the offices of the MRCOG. This and other source information was utilized by HDR to prepare a railroad cost evaluation study for the line between Belen and Trinidad. This piece was completed in early January 2006 and is available at the MRCOG offices.

## **Work Elements Commuter Rail Phase II**

### **Alternatives Analysis**

Description: In the Summer of 2004 the NMDOT and the MRCOG initiated the process to implement Commuter Rail service between Albuquerque and Santa Fe. The first step in this process was the preparation of a scoping report for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). This scoping report is available at the NMDOT and MRCOG. It outlines the proposed approach to the Alternatives Analysis which was kicked off in the early Fall of 2004. The Alternatives Analysis is another step required by the FTA and involves the evaluation of a number of modal solutions to problems and issues in the Albuquerque to Santa Fe Corridor. The Alternatives Analysis was completed in September of 2005 and is available at the offices of the NMDOT and MRCOG and is

posted on the Rail Runner website at [www.nmrailrunner.com](http://www.nmrailrunner.com). It includes the analysis of several modal alternatives at different degrees of detail. It includes general cost, patronage, environmental, performance, accessibility and economic information for each alternative considered.

### **Environmental & Preliminary Engineering**

Description: The NMDOT and the MRCOG have just initiated this phase of the Albuquerque to Santa Fe Commuter Rail project. Over the next year environmental and preliminary engineering work will be conducted on alternative alignments and service designs associated with the Community District Corridor identified in the Alternatives Analysis.